

REMARKS

In response to the present office action, Applicant affirms the election of Group II, which is directed to Figures 6-10 and claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-12, 14, 15, and 18-20, without traverse. Claims 3, 6, 7, 13, 16, and 17 are hereby withdrawn and canceled.

Applicant has amended the claims to focus more specifically on the puck and/or insert elements of the present invention. The *Lyman* and *Montgomery* references contain no features that can be characterized as pucks and/or inserts. Since *Ferris* is the only reference that addresses the pucks and inserts, the remarks are directed toward that reference.

*Ferris* discloses "cup shaped members 15" that are secured by means of rivets 16 on the top and bottom rails 10, 11. Col.1, lines 27-31. Thus, *Ferris* requires mechanical fasteners (i.e., rivets) and they are vertically oriented in the ends (not horizontal in the side facing surfaces) of the rails. The members 15 are formed "to fit snugly into the ends of the tubes 14 and to prevent lateral displacement." Col.1, lines 31-33. A cup shaped member 15a is used, having an enlarged opening through which passes a thimble 16a, by means of which it is secured to one of the rails. Col.2, lines 35-38. A bolt 17 passes through the thimble 16a and has a nut 18 by which the rails 10, 11 and tubes 14 are fastened together. Col.2, lines 38-42. Thus, threaded fasteners 17, 18 are required in addition to the rivets 16.

In contrast, claim 1 now requires, "pucks for joining the rails and the panels together, and wherein the pucks are void of threaded fasteners." *Ferris* cannot satisfy these elements since it requires both bolts 17 and nuts 18. Claim 2 was rewritten to require the pucks to "extend horizontally between the rails and the panels." All of *Ferris*' components are vertically oriented since they are mounted in the ends of the tubes 14, not in vertical facing surfaces on the sides of the rails and panels. As a result, claim 10 now requires the inserts to be mounted "in facing surfaces of the rails and panels such that associated ones of the pucks are extend between

adjacent ones of the inserts." The components described by *Ferris* are not in facing surfaces, and its "pucks" (which are really rivets 16) do not extend between adjacent ones of inserts. Each of these claims and the other dependent claims of claim 1 are now in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 11 was similarly rewritten with some of these elements. Claim 11 now requires "a plurality of openings in each of the upper and lower rails and the panels, wherein axially adjacent ones of the openings are coaxial." In *Ferris*, the openings are on the ends of the rails 14. Moreover, claim 11 adds "an insert mounted in each of the openings; and a puck extending between each of the axially adjacent ones of the inserts to define a plurality of pucks that secure the panels to the rails." *Ferris* does not have inserts (just thimbles 16a) and it does not have pucks that extend between adjacent inserts.

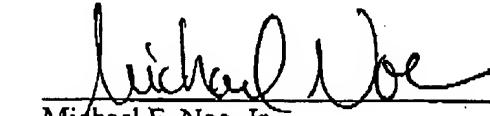
Dependent claim 12 requires the pucks to "extend horizontally between the rails and the panels." Clearly, all of *Ferris*' elements are vertically oriented. Claim 14 requires, "at least some of the inserts protrude from one of the rails and the panels." *Ferris* does not have inserts and, if it did, they do not protrude from the rails or panels. Claim 15 adds that "the inserts are mounted in facing surfaces of the rails and panels." Again, all of *Ferris*' components are mounted on the ends of its tubes 14. Claim 18 states that the pucks and inserts are void of threaded fasteners to secure the rails and panels, and *Ferris* uses bolts and nuts.

The final independent claim 19 has almost all of the previously described elements, including "the panels and the rails have vertical facing surfaces that abut each other," "axially adjacent ones of the inserts extend horizontally toward each other in a coaxial relationship," and, "the pucks and inserts are void of threaded fasteners for securing the panels to the rails." Thus, claim 19 and dependent claim 20, which contains several more limitations, are not anticipated by nor obvious in light of the cited references.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance and favorable action is requested. No extension of time is believed to be required. However, in the event that

an extension of time is required, please charge that extension fee and any other required fees to  
**Bracewell & Patterson, L.L.P.'s Deposit Account Number 50-0259.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Michael E. Noe, Jr.  
Reg. No. 44,975  
BRACEWELL & PATTERSON, L.L.P.  
P.O. Box 969  
Austin, Texas 78767-0969  
(512) 472-7800

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANTS

RECEIVED  
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

OCT 14 2003

OFFICIAL